

GENUINE LETTERS

TO A

YOUNG LADY of FAMILY,
FIGURE, and FORTUNE:

PREVIOUS TO

Her Intended Espousals.

To which are added,

Three POEMS, by the same AUTHOR.

I. FRIENDSHIP: To LÆTIUS.

II. To a FRIEND: Occasioned by the universally-unwelcome Report of the King of Prussia's being killed, in a Battle with the Austrians.

III. To the Memory of the Rev. Mr. CASTLEMAN, late Prebendary of Bristol, Vicar of St. Nicholas, in the said City; and also of South Petherton; all in the County of Somerset.

Coniubio iungam stabili——

——Si qua fata aspera cumpas!

VIRG.

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. WALKER, at the Bible, in St. Paul's Church-Yard. MDCCLXII.



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ADVERTISEMENT

From the PUBLISHER.

May 20, 1761.

THE publisher hopes being excused, the deferring so long as he hath, through unavoidable accidents done, to print these letters, which he hath had in his hands a considerable time; the rather, since by this delay, he is enabled to give the reader three genuine pieces, which he is well assured are the performance of the same ingenious author; two of which have never yet been in print—and the other perhaps from an incorrect copy, only in a publick news-paper.

ADVERTISEMENT.

AS this little piece makes its appearance, not in the ordinary course, and unassisted with a preface—it may be proper to inform the reader, in the way of advertisement, that the Author's purpose was, to have exhausted his subject [for which he had made an adequate preparation, and laid in sufficient materials] in at least ten or a dozen letters, to this most amiable young lady—but the last in the present collection had not been many hours concluded, when, to his inexpressible concern, he

he received intelligence, that her life, which was thought out of danger a day or two before, was then despaired of: and indeed she soon after expired! Upon the knowledge of which, he not only desisted from any farther prosecution of his original design—but was content, after many months had intervened, that what he had already written should come abroad, since the importunity thereto was not to be withstood, “with all its imperfections on its head,” rather than submit to the intolerable pain of a review—where every stroke of the pen must prove a dagger’s point to his heart! This, to the humane [besides that an unre-

served and free letter, wrote with no intent of publication, ought not to be canvassed, with the same severity, as a formal treatise, professedly composed for the press] will be an ample excuse for more unconcoctedness and greater inaccuracies, than, it is hoped, will be met with in the performance throughout —As to others, not so to their honour distinguished, he doth not hesitate a moment to declare his indifference, with regard to their determination, whether it be to applaud or censure.

THE
DEDICATION.

To the most eminently distinguished
of her sex, as for all other vir-
tues, so particularly, in the joint-
capacity of wife, super-intendant
of domestick affairs, and com-
panion for life !

MADAM,

THE untimely death of a very
valuable young lady, last win-
ter, in the small pox, for whose use
and entertainment the following
thoughts were hastily put together,
without ever being communicated;

having disappointed the author's view, of their becoming *private* property only—on his being prevailed with to make them *publick*. by those who were no strangers to the undertaking; whom can they be so aptly addressed to, as one, under whose roof the plan was originally formed, and, as far as it goes, in some measure, executed? This, though to you hitherto a secret, is, upon my honour, no fiction! And, what is more material to have observed--with equal truth, to be alledged—and the probability of which, none, who have the pleasure of your acquaintance, will dispute—one, from whose perfectly endearing conduct, as wife and mistress of a family,
much

much of their contents, in substance, was drawn! Had the very agreeable Miss —— happily survived that disorder, which robbed the world of one of the most deserving persons in it; at a crisis, when there was room to think, her *admirable* talents were about to have full *scope* and *power* of being exerted—every thing *good* and *great*, I am persuaded, might reasonably have been expected from her! For, as I have, more than once, I believe, since her decease, remarked to you, when conversing on the *melancholy* subject, she was really of a very extraordinary composition, and endued with many engaging, and no less promising, qualities: sedate, thoughtful, and, though

though by no means morose, serious beyond her years—soft, affable and gentle in her manners, with a readiness of apprehension and a quickness of spirit, marvelously enlivening every conversation she entered into—yet, so *tranquil* and *composed*, upon all *momentous* and truly *interesting* events, as to be able, with *accuracy* to weigh, and with *judgment* to estimate, their *future* conveniencies and inconveniencies, equally with the *present*—To this, she was generous, but by *unusual* ways, and such as escape *vulgar* notice ; which occasioned her *economy*, by those who saw only the *outsides* of things, to be *indignantly over-rated*—a reflection *it* in no wise deserved ! Nevertheless,

vertheless, to her praise be it remembered, that she was *frugal*; without, however, disgracing her station in life; without doing any thing unbecoming the honour of that worthy family she descended from, or injurious to the respectable name she bore—and, to crown all, her sincerity was unparalleled! So peculiar a frame of mind, with a reach of understanding much above what, generally-speaking, characterizes the sex, [would to God, the strength and vigour of her constitution had been as safely to be relied on] seemed, in my opinion, formed for advancing, with a *suitable* partner, *conubial* satisfaction, to the greatest possible height! To say all at once—
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in her I promised the world a second —. These were the motives by which I was induced to dedicate to you, as much of my design, as is discoverable in the two or three letters here published; an almost inconsiderable part of a much larger work, intended by me for Miss — to have availed herself of, had it so pleased God, at a most important and critical juncture: but which, under the unfortunate circumstances already described, no consideration whatever will be of force to make me think of perfecting, in the manner *proposed*. I am not insensible of what advantage it would be, as well to the author's credit as to the book-feller's profit, was I at liberty to oblige

blige the curious, whose candour this embryo is unexpectedly given up to, with the *names* of the two most incomparably-excellent personages, whom, in composing these instructive lessons, I wrote *from* and *for* : the *one*, qualified beyond all I ever knew, to take the lead with dignity, on such an occasion ; and the *other* no less disposed to follow, with singular observance, so *bright* an example, over that *slippery* and *dangerous* road, the *entrance* into which, at first, is fruitful of so many and such grievous mistakes—and the *deportment* therein afterwards teems with as great a degree of happiness or misery, to travellers, as this world affords ! But, confident

fident as I am, upon the best and
 surest grounds, that the character
 of her, to whose memory I am de-
 sirous of doing justice, will stand the
 severest test, and be superior to any
 enquiries that may be made about
 her, on such a discovery—judging
 of others by myself, I am not so
 well satisfied, that the family-afflic-
 tion, now a little subsided, might
 not thereby be *unseasonably* renewed
 —an evil, I should be heartily sorry
 for having any way contributed to!
 And, with regard to yourself, Ma-
 dam, whom I presume, thus *dar-
 ingly* in the face of your whole sex,
 to single out, for the patroness of
 these letters, above acknowledged
 to

to be, in some sense, your legal property—not only without having obtained permission for so doing, but even without having asked it—such a step may be thought superfluous and unnecessary: for though, it is possible, *many* will be guessed at, by readers of little or no discernment, in these matters; and probably *some few* will be vain enough to arrogate to themselves, a *disputed* title, to the uncommon distinction at the head of this epistle dedicatory—it is certain, and I will maintain it, with my last drop of ink, justly to appertain to one person, and to that ONE only! whom, I look upon it, as a duty incumbent on me not to take leave of,
without

without first asking pardon for this bold intrusion—having only to plead in my behalf, the irresistible impression I was under, from her exalted merit—together with a grateful resentment of the numerous favours received, for many years past, at —, by

Her most obliged,

And entirely devoted,

Humble Servant.

C. M. Olober the
20th, 1758.

LETTER I.

Dear Miss S——.

A Celebrated French writer, much admired for his *taste* and *judgment*, observes of Madam de Longueville, a noted Wit and Beauty, and sister to the famous Prince of Condé—that, contrary to the custom of other Ladies, who too much affect acting the Tyrant, in proportion to the ascendant they have, or but presume they have, over their Votaries; from the moment, she declared herself in favour of any Lover, she resigned whether with, or without, the *usual*

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sacrifices, on such occasions, is not said) even her very sentiment and way of thinking to *his*; and this, to such a degree, as during the whole time an intercourse between them lasted, properly speaking, to have *none* of her own! A rare instance, of that tender, soft, and pliant disposition, which ought to be the characteristick and distinguishing quality of *one* sex, as it seldom fails being attended with the most extraordinary consequences, to their advantage, from the *other*. Notwithstanding those objections, that may, with too much justice, be made to the liberties, in point of gallantry, this lady is reported, by most of her cotemporaries, to have taken; agreeable however to the prevailing mode of those times in which she lived; and particularly so, to the
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practice of that court, whose delight and ornament she was — the uncommon penetration, of that fair one, to whom I am writing, will, I dare say, discover somewhat so noble and elevated, and, at the same time, so indearing and striking, in a behaviour of this kind, abstracted from and independent of *that* wherein she is universally allowed to have been faulty—as, to be seriously of opinion, with me, that her plan is worthy the attention of all those ladies, who have views of connexion, on the foot of innocence, with men ; and thoughts of establishing and perpetuating their felicity, in a state, which I have the pleasure to hear whispered, among some of our common acquaintance, may soon be your lot. It is to this prepossession, not rashly, nor without good foundation,

by me given into, that you are chiefly indebted for the following Scroll : wherein I have adventured, first as a warm advocate for, and, to the utmost of my power, a strenuous promoter of, connubial happiness in general—Secondly, as having an intimacy with many of your relations, I had almost said, with the whole family ; to every one of whom, it is not to be doubted, that what hath ever so remote a tendency to promote your welfare, is in course sure of a hearty acceptance—but, indeed principally, and above all other considerations, as a passionate, though disinterested well-wisher to, and as having something, both in quality and degree, like a parental fondness for yourself—to lay before you, at the only crisis I have hope of doing it to good purpose,

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a few serious and sober strictures, relative to the supposed *change* of your condition, from maid to wife—a momentous change, as all agree, not to be enterprized by the inconsiderate, without extreme danger; and which, the best qualified for it, do, in some sort, tremble at the near approach of! Now this, coming from a person in years, and seemingly *dead* to the world, and to its *ordinary* enjoyments, and in so positive and dictating a style, if you should, as for what I know you may, in flush and gaiety of youth, call *sermonising*; I will rather acquiesce, in the ridicule, to your utmost wishes—rather, I say, than dispute Miss S—’s legal right to affix *this*, or any *other* appellation she may be pleased with, to a production, calculated for no other intent than to do her

service ; and which, she might, not improbably, find herself *greatly* prejudiced against, to the frustrating my whole scheme, should any misunderstanding or difference arise between us, at first setting out. In return however, for this so obliging a concession, on my part, two liberties, (essential, I am informed, to every preacher) you will not, in your goodness, believe me unreasonable or immoderate in my demand, to be indulged with : *one* is, that of choosing my own *text* ; which, as most applicable to the occasion of this address, shall be, Madam de Longueville's *favourite* maxim, above mentioned—the *other*, that of launching out, *à l'aventure*, as the French express it, whenever I have inclination to do so ; and, of introducing into my discourse such general reflections on the Matrimonial Union,

as have occurred during that space of time, which, on your account, I had allotted to the consideration thereof; though you should be sensible, many of them are of that nature, you can have no *personal* concern in their observance—and this, as well by way of *embellishment* to the whole, as for the benefit of the sex, in general—or, to speak more properly, and in terms less liable to be misconstrued (since I write, or preach, if you will have it so, to a select audience only) of such young persons, in particular, whom, in any *future* period of your life, you may be interested or inclined, by a free communication, to favour, in a suitable manner. Prelimi-

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naries thus amicably adjusted; the first thing I am to recommend to you, on the French lady's principle, is to avoid,

with the utmost care and circumspection, as the bane of matrimonial comfort, an affectation of appearing to the world, *more* wise—*more* learned—*more* knowing—in short, *more* any thing, to to which the duty of a wife hath not immediate relation, than him whom you shall make choice of for a husband; whether he be a man of great or small abilities, and whether your own share of understanding exceed, or fall short of, the ordinary standard: for these are, in reality, circumstances of no importance in the case; and she, who takes her measures wholly from them, will certainly, in the end, be the dupe of her own credulity. Plain and obvious however as the ground of this caution is, nothing is more evident, than that a husband is the *last* person the

knowing

knowing ones of your sex care to acknowledge themselves any way inferiour to: and, to account for such a mistaken notion, and its general prevalence, may be well worth a wise man's speculation; perhaps your humble correspondent is not much out in his conjectures thereupon, which however you are left to judge of. The honeymoon then, as it is vulgarly termed, being, to my conception, that delicate season, wherein a propensity to this *notable* distinction is apt, among the ladies, to break out and to shew itself most; and such prejudices, when rooted in a female breast, being of difficult removal or restraint *afterwards*; it may be necessary, that a just and true representation of the appearances, so peculiar to *this* era, and whence the evil complained of possibly

possibly ariseth, be exhibited, in the most undisguised and simple dress, to your view : for thus, an apprehension, strong as yours is, instead of being misguided, and led into errors, in so *capital* a point, will learn a due moderation, together with a becoming decency, in *estimating* the good and ill qualities, the perfections and imperfections, both of yourself, and of the man you are to be joined with. Not to mince the matter, nor to value ourselves upon a sufficiency, none of us, in the day of tryal, can make good—he, I solemnly aver, must be *less*, or *more*, than Man, and have *somewhat* amazingly uncommon in his constitution, who, in a *new* and *long-expected* familiarity with a kind and amiable creature of the other sex—whose heart is, perhaps, not
without

without great difficulty and after repeated solicitations. *tuned* and brought to an unison with his own—whose interest is thereby become the *same*—and joys common to them both—who, I say, can, in so ticklish a situation, and in such rapturous circumstances, be enough mindful of himself and of his ordinary concerns, to think, judge and act with his wonted prudence and accustomed reserve—on the *other* hand, the most habil and naturally the most compliant temper, in one of *your* sex, not apprized in time of *these* events, their *nature* and *tendency*, will insensibly fall into the *dear* mistake of over-rating *her own* merit, and of conceiving whatever indulgence, condescension or deference she experienceth, in this agreeable commerce, with one so conformable,

formable, in all respects, to her desires, no more, than *what* is in strictness due to her, in virtue of some *supposed* excellence and *imagined* superiority, with regard to every one of those points her *fond* husband cannot, as yet, bring himself to dispute, in a *reasonable* way, with her. Hence, it is manifest, arise misconceptions, of the *worst* sort, and *longer* lasting by far, than *that* ductility of humour, and *those* complacencies in consequence thereof, to which their existence is owing. That a wife may be the *very thing* she claims to be, I do not deny—vice and folly being as little confined to sex and station, as wisdom and virtue: that she is, for *this* reason, well entitled to *dethrone* her sovereign, and to take the reins of government into her own hands, is not so easily proved;

proved; and, perhaps, will *ever* continue, as it hath *hitherto* been thought, a question entirely problematical, because of a great variety, and also as great a difference, of accidental circumstances, attending the case: but, that *such* a power, without an acknowledgment thereof, from every by-stander, is of no value (for so, whoever opposeth me, must argue) I scruple not to assert, is an absolute falsehood—neither is it to be questioned, that where this *supposeable* condition subsists not, it is ten to one, but from the afore-recited *extravagancies* and *cageries*, a wife's imagination may be enough vitiated to influence her acting, as it did. On either supposition, I must maintain, it is not a married woman's *duty*, and is diametrically opposite to her *interest*, to
be

be actuated by these and the like absurd principles. With regard to *duty*, little, I think, need be here offered; the laws of God and man having expressly subjected the wife to the husband. And, so strong and forcible is this argument, that few of the dear creatures are so bold, to controvert with us the right *in general*, if we will oblige them with the admittance of the *exceptions* peculiar to themselves. Now *exceptions*, I apprehend, to the *general* rule, will either be found or fancied, by every haughty and imperious dame, sufficient, and more than sufficient, whereon to establish that *enlargement* of her authority she aims at. On all which, one positive, but impartial decision may suffice—that *they* can be of no validity to reverse the *natural* course of things,
and

and to justify doing what heaven and earth have decreed shall not be done! Nor is the plea of *interest* less persuasive on the same side of the question: for if a husband is conscious of *his own* natural or acquired advantages to judge of those particulars, which come *equally* under the cognizance of himself and of his wife, as soon as the soft and yielding season of dalliance is past, and cool deliberate reason resumes its place—he will, as naturally he ought, have *many* hours of sober reflection, touching his *honour* and his *interest*; both of which are *concerned*, that as *few* mistakes as possible be committed, in respect to his domestick affairs, and to those of greater importance still; the consequence of which composed thinking, must unavoidably be,

be, a weaning himself by degrees, luckily for his wife, if it is not *abruptly*, from those petty *agreements* and bewitching *douceurs*, which have occasioned *originally*, and will, if not discontinued in time, *farther* encrease, the inconveniencies, he is so justly apprehensive of danger or dishonour from. *This*, or even much *more* than this, is to be expected, from a man of *ordinary* prudence, (however easy in his temper, and averse to family-jars) out of regard to his fortune, his credit, and his condition in life. To a tender—a sensible—but withal an indulged and *self-opinionated* female, who hath, ever since the indissoluble knot was tied, looked but at one end of the perspective, a *fall*, in *this* manner, from the height, whereon she had so indiscreetly advanced herself,

will be a fall *indeed!* like *that* of Eve's being driven, for an almost inevitable transgression, from the *sweets* of Paradise to the thorns and briars of a tumultuous and pains-encreasing world. Yet fall she must, sooner or later, or perhaps all go to wreck, and general ruin ensue. But, saith a Madam Quick, unable to digest so hard a morsel—"Supposing me (for you acknowledge a possibility thereof!) yoked with a man of lesser capacity, evidently so, than myself—is the same reasoning just? and are the like motives of *duty*, *interest*, and I know not what besides, equally cogent and conclusive? Having before granted this to be a *possible* case, tho' oftner pretended than so in reality; the objection, no doubt, ought to be answered. In a word then, I am con-

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vinced they are: with this aggravating circumstance, well deserving to be attended to, by such as are more curious in examining the rent-roll, than the head-piece, of their lovers—that many *particulars*, which a husband of the best understanding, and of long experience in the world, may not, unless in extreme danger and absolute necessity, *choose* to see the *impropriety* of, when recommended to, or imposed on, him, by a loving and a beloved wife; whose weakness he knows and pities at the same time—a conceited blockhead, of no parts, and but one degree from an idiot, will frequently disturb, thwart, and over-rule, for the sake of contradiction, or to exert his legal, and to such a one, most valuable prerogative! And thus, as it sometimes happens in affairs respecting civil
society

society and government, an unsuccessful attempt to gain power, where the laws of reason and equity, or of the constitution, admit it not to be due, may be attended with the irrevocable loss thereof where it is; or where, to avoid greater inconveniencies, it hath, in some circumstances, been supposed reasonable it should be. Still will you object—I beg pardon, and ought rather to say, some of your sex will; for of you I have better thoughts—That, “ if petticoat-government is not to be endured where a husband is notoriously of superiour understanding to his wife, and therefore well intitled to reign without a competitor (a point, it seems, agreed betwixt us) by parity of reason, neither should a fool or a drone, because he puts on breeches, be suffered to bring poverty

or disgrace on a deserving woman and her innocent offspring, for want of the *seasonable* interposition of her, who, as she is equally interested in, may confessedly be better qualified for, the preservation of the whole?" In answer to which, I am to remind you, that to rule is one thing, to affect being known to rule is another: they are very distinct modes, entirely unconnected with, and having no relation to, each other. For the former, I doubt not, as already observed, there may, in some few instances, be room; for the latter, I persist in affirming there never can: which is the main question here to be discussed, and the subject of our present contest; which, under an apprehension of being thought tiresome, I shall push no further—than to relate a curious anecdote or two; the nature

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and

and circumstances of which, since I am too well informed of to endanger a misrepresentation, you will be pleased to look on, as pointing out the best and most salutary way of proceeding in these cases, more strongly, more emphatically, and more authoritatively, than any other words I can think of telling my meaning by. In a certain kingdom, not necessary to be here named, a lady of very high birth, many years since dead, and whose memory I greatly honour, was coupled with one suitable to her in all respects, those of the mind only excepted ; in which particular, not only her advantage over him was transcendent and unquestionable, but her capacity was judged to equal, if not to exceed, that of most men ; being of a family as conspicuous, in all and every one of its branches, for wisdom as for

integrity and honour ! yet such was her consummate prudence, her adroitness and knowledge of the world, that when authorised, if ever woman was, to carry every thing with a high hand, and in her *own* name, I never heard, that either in the management of a large revenue, or among her tradesmen and dependents, who were numerous, any other than that of her lord, was mentioned ; who, whilst he seemed to the world to govern, was wise enough, though no Solomon, as already hinted, not to interrupt the peaceable and prosperous course of his affairs with unnecessary disputes about prerogative, nor to be dissatisfied with her who directed them, under his sanction, so much to the credit and advantage of both. Had her ladyship been ambitious, as many of the sex are, of adding *the whip*
and

and the bell, those *tell-tale* memorials of mastership, to the more substantial and solid evidences of that power she was indisputably possessed of, it is probable a husband of this stamp had proved more than ordinarily stubborn and refractory : but her good sense made her easily understand how much preferable a substance is to a shadow ; and the judicious method she had so wisely, at first, resolved on, in opposition to others, suggested to her by able heads whom she consulted, was happily persevered in to the last ; so as her authority and power suffered neither suspension nor diminution to her dying day : and what is the highest encomium on her uncommon merit, her disconsolate spouse, though childless in all likelihood, through despair of finding her equal, still continues

a widower. Another of much inferior rank, nor to be compared with the foregoing, though not without a title, and to whom you are less a stranger, by no greater art than that of dexterously counterfeiting a *mute* (for sure I am, the part she acted was not natural) and taking to her assistance the cordial prescribed by Sir Richard Steel to Miss Molly, a famed toast, whom himself, it is said, had married—on every occasion wherein a self-willed and positive, though otherwise no ill-natured, husband, was determined, brought him back to her lure with a twine-thread, as we call it, in very few minutes: insomuch, that whilst *apparently* governed in the most arbitrary manner *herself*, I know not if she once failed, during the whole course of her intermarriage with him, conducting
her

her own resolutions and purposes to the desired end! From these examples, and others now and then to be picked up, it should seem to be womens own fault chiefly that they are at any time deprived of, or do never arrive at, that degree of influence over a husband which they so much covet. For, to state the case fairly—whatever share of understanding the men have, be it more or less, is not without its open and defenceless quarter, whereon to be assailed and got the better of by your charming sex! The whole art, believe me, is to know when to advance and when to recede—this it becometh every female, as she hath her future happiness in the married state at heart, to study: and this, I am confident, my dear and much honoured friend Miss S—— will study, as the surest means,

means, under the divine Providence, of rendering those many excellent qualities she is mistress of serviceable to herself and to her spouse;—and consequently of attaining that perfect and uninterrupted tranquility in marriage, which she is most sincerely wished, by

Her affectionate humble Servant.

LETTER

L E T T E R II.

Dear Miss S——,

NEXT to a wife's disclaiming and giving up entirely all pretence to such forced pre-eminence and unnatural distinction, which are alike incompatible with her true interest in general, and inconsistent with the love, duty, and obedience she owes her husband in particular; than which, I have shewn, nothing to be of more pernicious and fatal tendency in the marriage-state—a *second* piece of advice I am to offer, which
heark-

hearkened to, may lessen the number and weight of those obstacles you will meet with in the way to that happiness whither my endeavours are conducting you; of equal importance, and not absolutely unconnected, with the *former*, is, “ never to have views opposite to, or different from, *those* of him whose arms you have approved of quartering in the same escutcheon with your own;” which falling in with the French lady’s favourite maxim, I shall not deviate from my intended purpose, by enlarging copiously on, as the subject well deserves, in this second letter. By the word *vieu*, I would be understood to mean nothing more than what is, in either, the object of desire, satisfaction, and content,—or of dislike, contempt, and aversion; in regard to which,

no consideration whatever ought to dis-join and separate those united in so close and sacred a bond as that of matrimony. Here too, a proper or an improper apprehension of things, in the honey-moon [that prolifick season, which is the true seed-time of a future harvest, abundantly fruitful in a good or ill produce, according to the use that may be made thereof] is surely of more consequence than it is commonly conceived to be ; if one may conjecture by the little caution, and less care, exhibited at this juncture by parents, and others, whom we are not to suppose totally unconcerned in the issue. These, or I am greatly misinformed, having a deal to answer for, on account of their precipitately interfering, as is the custom of many, and giving unasked counsel, little differing from commands,

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to new-married people, on such trifling occasions, as are a ground of suspicion, that the manumission or enfranchisement of the parties bearing the most considerable share in this solemn act, is designed as conditional only, and subject, in a degree, to the same controul as their former state of servitude and dependance. When such indiscretions proceed from the relations of both sides, occasionally or as opportunity offers, this consideration, if it does, as perhaps it may, somewhat alleviate the injustice, cannot yet diminish the pain of either; and when the offence comes from one quarter only, its sure effect cannot but be resentment from the other. Errors of judgment are what the wisest and most experienced are more or less liable to; therefore are they rightly conceived, in my
system

system of divinity, to have in them a proportionable degree of innocency. That two young things just come together, and not having sufficient knowledge of each other's tempers (for dissimulation before marriage is not appropriated to either sex) should think, speak, or act at certain times, and on certain points, void of the requisite foresight, whereby true harmony subsists, is no such matter of wonderment;—but I have ever observed, that those fraca's and little misunderstandings, which are hereby, casually, as it were, and without design, engendered, are best composed and reconciled by man and wife when left to themselves; a *je ne sçai quoi* of tenderness soon getting the better of resentment in all such domestick quarrels as have no witnesses to them. Where-

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as a false notion of honour, spirit, resolution, and the like unintelligible cant, by which opposition is in the main supported, may be rather encouraged than abated by the privacy a by-stander hath, and the publick notice that is taken of it. Whenever therefore you marry, carry in your mind the inspired penman's golden rule, of forgetting, in some sense, your own country and your father's house; or all those good qualities, by which you are so early distinguished, may prove ineffectual to pleasure, for any continuance of time, your new lord and master: and what is the worst part of the story, even your own resolution of pleasing, through the imprudence of others, in the end fail. Now, *this* sound maxim evidently includes in it an entire reliance, from that day forward, on

other

other instructions than those you have been accustomed to listen to whilst under a parent's eye—*another* oeconomy, conform to which, every action of your life is to be squared—and a *new* way of thinking, as different from the former as are the duties of wife and daughter respectively. Not that *these* obligations are absolutely to supersede, as being ever incompatible with, each other; which is a grand mistake on the other side;—but my meaning is, that as oft as they do interfere, which will many times happen, you are to use the same method of judging and making your election, as when sundry other moral or christian duties demand your acknowledgment; which is, to give the preference to *that* which is highest in dignity, and weightiest in importance. If then it is so in-

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cumbent

cumbent on a man to leave his father and mother, as to cleave fast and steadily to his wife, because of that cover and protection which are due from him, in an *especial* manner, to her before others—the obligation between them being reciprocal and the same, neither should a wife suffer herself, even in thought, to be divorced, or so estranged in affection, from her husband, as to balance for a moment the applause or censure of the whole world, against the approbation or reproaches of *her own* conscience; for having conformed or been disobedient to the rules by *him* prescribed, and that order and regularity, which, for the convenience of both, he hath thought fit to establish—whether they regard the management of his domestick affairs, his concerns in general, or her own

own conduct in particular : for you are not to learn, that as by this union, what property a woman hath becomes her husband's, with the surrendry of her person ; and subject, agreeable to the laws of all civilized communities, to his authority and governance absolutely, in case of no provision express to the contrary ;—which, wherever it takes place, I cannot but look on as an impolitick scheme, and productive of *worse* evils than *those* it is calculated to prevent.— So likewise, because of her bearing his name, and being a mother to his children, her honour is no less his : which is an unanswerable argument in favour of those wise restraints a *wary* husband may think himself sometimes indispensably obliged to lay an unreflecting or giddy young thing of no experience, un-

der ; and which it is her duty willingly and without murmuring to submit to, in matters apparently of an indifferent nature, and visibly of no consequence ; till age shall have improved her knowledge of things, and, in course, rendered her capable of judging for herself : an alternative, in the estimation of every husband, doubtless far more desirable and pleasing than the *other*. Nor is it fit to pass over unreflected on, the impertinent associations of maiden aunts and cousins, and that group of *good women*, as with equal truth and modesty they style themselves, whose business is, to put young people in a way,—insinuate devices and arts of managing a husband,—collect examples and lay down rules of all that is proper to be done in order to a wife's not giving ground too much

much in the beginning, which it may be beyond her skill or out of her power, forsooth, to recover afterwards! Shun, dear Miss,—such busy bodies as you would the plague; their very breath is contagious! and though, like a dram upon urgent necessity, their maxims hearkened to, may inspire any one, for a few minutes, with a kind of false courage, to forget or to despise what hath occasioned in them some uneasiness;—their tendency is, too surely, to encrease the disorder and to impair the constitution. Sweet, perhaps, like the prophet's roll, as these *warm* applications may seem to the palate, they will infallibly turn sour, or prove of hard digestion in the stomach! Furthermore, by lending a willing ear to such pernicious counsellors, you will, not improbably, at some un-

guarded hour, be induced to communicate those family-secrets, and so much of what passeth ordinarily betwixt yourself and spouse, as you may be sorry for all your life after; and which, if the good man through tenderness should, upon a perfect reconciliation, be prevailed on to forgive and to forget—you will scarce pardon yourself the guilt of so great an imprudence. By way of argument let me suppose, much of the grievance you labour under, and many of the complaints this angling tribe draws from you, to be really groundless—for such things have been—and that passion and present resentment so given way to by yourself, and encouraged by others, as the case implies, have the greatest share in what indigested and ill-timed projects you are

rash

rash and adventurous enough to form,
 by way of relief—is it not worth while
 to consider, as a Christian, how unjust
 and iniquitous a part you are acting?
 If to slander and cast undeserved asper-
 sions on an innocent person, to whom
 you stand in no *other* relation than that
 of neighbour or acquaintance, be a
 breach of that charity which the Divi-
 nity itself is engaged to resent and
 punish, in case of no intervening re-
 pentance—to ward the blow; what a
 fearful looking for of judgment to
 come, must await the infringement of
 a divine law, attended with so many
 aggravating circumstances? But this,
 to you, need not be insisted on. Let
 me in the next place take it for granted,
 that a husband hath those foibles, im-
 perfections, and even vices, laid to his
 D + charge,

charge, and made the subject of female tittle-tattle; that he is passionate, morose, and sour; that he dissipates and squanders away the common stock in riotous living; and, during such excesses, exposeth his conjugal affection to be frequently called in question. These or greater evils, if such there can be, admitted; where, I would ask, is the wisdom or policy of holding up to publick view a conduct like that here mentioned; or of expatiating thereon, in passion, to the most intimate friend, much less to those who have no pretence to such distinction? That ill-judging prince who exhibited the naked charms of a favourite sultana to one of his courtiers, was soon after knocked on the head by him for his indiscretion. And a worse fate attends that woman [for what is death,

death, in the sex's opinion, compared with the *irretrievable* loss of affection in a beloved object] who but whispers abroad the evil deeds of a husband she is not without hopes of one time or other reclaiming; because, though he is ill-principled, it is possible he may not be entirely void of shame—Now, whenever he gets the better of *that* [and nothing contributes so much *thereto*, as unwisely making the world acquainted with the faulty part of his character] the only restraint that was on him is lost: what till then perhaps had been the work of darkness, is now practised openly and in the face of the sun—and a wife is left under the oppression of the most intense wrongs, equally exposed to the censures of an *ill-natured* world, and to the *lasting* contempt of *him* who is the author
of

of her sufferings; for having wanted away, and deprived herself of, the *only* probable means, at some fortunate and unforeseen crisis, of putting a period to them. A sense of *shame*, I repeat it, is of more avail, to curb and check libertines, generally speaking, in their career, than principle itself: many a profligate and abandoned wretch, having been reclaimed by soft and healing measures, under a consciousness of his deserving worse usage;—who could have withstood, without any other effects than *those* of implacable resentment, being set out in proper colours, as a mark to be gazed at by her whom he hath injured. A Sir Charles Easy, as we behold him on the stage, is by no means a fictitious character, or coloured beyond

beyond nature, in that particular where he grows sensible of *his own* unworthiness, from a consideration of his *forgiving* lady's extreme tenderness for his reputation as a good and kind husband: well therefore may he exclaim in the following terms of passionate remorse;—

“ What a villain have I been, for ill-treating so deserving a wife!” Neither was it without design, or upon no foundation, that a few lines back I charged mankind with *ill nature*, on being made privy to such domestick broils as are best buried in secrecy. The truth is, its behaviour on these occasions is much the same as upon other instances of human frailty, and *those* sufferings which they are ordinarily productive of: the true reason whereof I conceive to be,

because

because whatever depresseth *one* man, to appearance raiseth *another*, not *so* to his dishonour or detriment affected : which notion, though groundless and indefensible, too generally prevails with the *many* ; therefore are *they* no competent nor indifferent judges of what they hear or see among their neighbours. Hence too it is, that though curiosity and a painful itch after what is *new*, may be the inducements to those airs of compassion, by the force of which, a weak woman is imposed on, to the laying herself open to the importunities of every curious and busy enquirer ; the secret is no sooner gained, than a visible contempt succeeds the other, not only in detestation and in derision of the balder's folly, for having been so unreserved ; [for such a return

might

might be naturally enough expected;] but what infers the height of barbarity, and is therefore inexcusable, by way of insult over the occasion, be it ever so calamitous.—How just and true a representation of things this is, every relation or tale of distress witnesseth; wherein scarce one of a thousand of those who express the most ardent impatience to have their curiosity satisfied, is of a complexion properly to commiserate, or to endeavour the relief of, the disconsolate and unhappy relater. I may add too, that the propensity of mankind to some certain failings, in the number of those too often disquieting married people, inclines many to go over to that party whence the injury proceeds: and with such, a villanous
 jest

jest is ample attonement for flintiness of heart; and being witty, for being unjust. It is well, indeed, if the extravagance goes no farther: one of the best writers this kingdom ever bred having long since lamented, that the consequence of some adventures but too customarily affects, in this world, the injured and the innocent only; which he accounts for in the same manner I have done. Such being the obvious result of almost any measures a discontented wife can take, *out of herself*, in prejudice of a husband; her own fate being involved in, and inseparable from his, is it to be questioned, that her best remedy, all things considered, is patience, and a resignation to the will and pleasure of that supreme and all-wise Being, without
whose

whose permission nothing can come to pass, and from whose goodness an end to undeserved sufferings may, sooner or later, be expected? At all events, this assure yourself of, that ill-timed resentments are most likely to increase them; as, to expose the author thereof, in the circumstances above related, is, in course, without an extraordinary interposition of Providence, to add, I fear, perpetuity to their intenseness. To expect any advantageous turn in your affairs on such emergencies, *out of yourself*, I have above hinted to be most absurd; and this, to the discountenancing of those applications, which are usually made on every cross word that passeth to parents, relations and acquaintance, as entirely void of duty, and for
the

the most part full of danger. For, after all, such commotion best subsides of itself, if alienation of affection, in no degree, hath already taken place: on which supposition, and also that no supposition thereof hath been entertained, the attempting of a reconciliation successfully, in your own person, and without any mediator, though it requires some labour and more address, will abundantly answer the difficulty. To do otherwise, is renouncing that protection you acknowledge yourself to stand in need of, and disclaiming absolutely that confidence, which, as it ought ever to have subsisted between you, so, on my word, is it, at the instant you would be believed to slight and to undervalue it most, most in your inclination, wishes, and study,

to

to see happily renewed. But, besides *that* already enlarged on, which is of so complicated and general a nature, as to leave no room for calling in question its cause or its effects, there are other lesser imprudencies, not a few, whereby a wife may convince all mankind of *such* coolness and indifference towards her husband, as carryeth with it an ill sound, and is greatly and deservedly liable to censure. When her general course of life, however blameless in itself, is *such* as he hath expressed disapprobation of, or dissatisfaction in; when she is regardless of his sober and dispassionate remonstrances; sets at nought his appointments; hath his person in contempt; and is uneasy in his company; when she countenanceth his avowed or secret

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enemies,

enemies, and receiveth those with whom he hath friendship or familiarity distinguishibly reserved and wanting; when his children have not that maternal care bestowed on them which is proper; domestick affairs, for want of *due* looking after, run to ruin; or lastly, her *own* person, through negligence, or for a *worse* cause, is rendered distasteful to, or reflects dishonour on, *him*—May I have leave to number with the foregoing, a peccadillo, which, if all men were of my mind, it would be needless to comment on. You have heard me, and sometimes not without a gentle reproof, ever of a *different* way of thinking, in party-matters and politicks, with the lady who is so obliging to entertain, or be entertained by me, in discourse

on

on the extensive and fruitful theme; and that for two very extraordinary reasons: if you will dispense with my telling you one of them, I do not care if I communicate the other.—In short, I love to hear the dear creatures talk; and what so strong an incitement to the display of female oratory, as a well-judged opposition, not so *resolutely* or *positively* carried on, as to exclude, with them, the expectation of making a proselyte by their arguments, and winning over to their party one of the other sex, by their dexterity and adroitness in managing them? But forasmuch as different men have a different way of thinking; as it is not so complaisant, so neither may it prove quite so safe for an overzealous wife, to be always persecuting

her husband on topicks which he cannot, or will not, understand in a sense conform to hers. Every one of these instances, and many more the like, which I might produce, do indeed threaten, not to say indicate, in the strongest acceptation of the word, *a divorce—that* of the mind, equally culpable with, or rather more so than, *that* of the body. But is there, in reality, you will say, so much blindness, not to give it a worse name, in our sex? What! call black white, and white black, from no other motive than perverseness? The whole must surely be a fiction, out of the reach of possibility! Your youth—your inexperience—and, above all, your sweetness of temper, and averfeness to finding fault, may
well

well dispose you to call in question what you see no appearance of, openly and above board, and to doubt if these things are so? But even *this* circumstance of dissimulation or cunning, *whereby* a blameable character is frequently obscured, or totally hid, from an ordinary and not over-curious spectator, is far from lessening the real demerit thereof, with the experienced, and those of greater discernment. Listen a while, dear madam, before you positively determine on believing or disbelieving these and other as *incomprehensible* mysteries. I could tell you of a wife who redoubled her attachment to one of the most insignificant pursuits imaginable—a thing not considerable enough to be particularly named, which she had

hitherto but rarely, or not at all, regarded, and which her complaisant husband had therefore, to her face, given no opinion of; on accidentally learning from a third person the good man's inconceivable dislike thereof—*Another* would rise of a morning earlier or later, and shorten or protract her afternoons-visits, on the same principle;—a *third* could never be persuaded to speak or think well of one of her nearest neighbours, until a lucky incident made a better Christian of her, than the twelve apostles, without the aid of a miracle, could have done;—and what was that, think you, but an irreconcilable breach between her husband and him she had conceived so hardly of! Not to weary you with proofs, it hath been confidently

dently asserted of *one* most extraordinary female, that she never retired to her closet but in the height of passion and resentment, and when some hasty words had passed between her and her spouse ! Well inclined, as you or I may be, to put a charitable construction on this act, the whole family, wherein so solemn a farce used to be played, entertained different thoughts of the matter; and, one and all, condemned the performer in such terms of reproach as are not decent to have recorded. *Other* occurrences there are *many*, of *less* moment and importance still in themselves; and *only* to be heeded, as they spring from a *bad* principle, and may produce as *bad* consequences; which it therefore becometh a prudent wife to bestow serious

and timely consideration on. In the married state, nothing ought to be looked on as *indifferent*, because nothing is *so*. How circumspect then should a married lady be in all her thoughts, words, and actions ; not only to preserve innocence, but also to prevent misconstructions ? A husband who is perfectly satisfied of his wife's being unalterably in the *same* interest with him, will, if he wants not common sense, make great allowance for, and prudently overlook, any indiscretions not of the grosser sort—but whenever that Rubicon is passed [R—— I suppose may have inured you to this classical allusion] bubbles, light as air, will serve for proof to a *so* provoked husband, of want of conduct, and even of virtue itself ! Under *so* severe,
but

but I must not call it *unjust*, a planet, are women born; for she who is imprudent enough to run this risque, rather through levity than from viciousness, in the beginning, may, by some untoward assemblage of circumstances afterwards, be, in the end, the very *abject* she had in her wrong been *supposed* only. I might, on *this* subject, scribble as many pages as I have lines, and justify my opinion by as many arguments as a common-sized letter contains words;—but I must call to mind whom I am writing to—*one* whom the force of reason, in any case where plainly and in few words discovered, cannot fail reaching, and making due impression on—and *whom* a multitude of terms may confound, but can in none deceive—To
your

your good sense then I appeal, to have the whole maturely considered ; and to your judgment, that the issue may be such as becometh him, in his zeal for your good, to expect and earnestly pray for—who is,

Madam,

Your most sincere well-wisher,

And affectionate humble Servant,

Z.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R I I I .

Dear Miss S—.

Hitherto, in preparing you for the true and solid enjoyments of matrimony, I have insisted on two very weighty articles, from considerations not quite obvious to common apprehension: what I design for the subject matter of this letter is of such a nature as to be illustrated and enforced by those that are more so; and consequently your subscribing heartily thereto is little to be doubted. If

you

you are already convinced, which I cannot but assure myself of, that an imperious and a too assuming air in a wife, on any provocation, is not the ready way to preserve a husband's affection; and, even beyond this, to be in a different interest from him, through capriciousness and any petulancy of your own, or from want of honesty or judgment in those whom you may chance to advise with, bids fair for a total and an irrevocable estrangement—you must certainly lend a willing ear to whatever shall be farther offered, in view to guarding against and parrying those mortal thrusts at your quiet. But a disposition like yours, we may presume, was not given for negative excellence only; neither would such serve the present exigency.

To

To be, in some sense, indifferent to what passeth ordinarily in the world, may be no bad maxim, I allow; considering how much the whole, and every part thereof, favoureth of vice and folly—how catching epidemical disorders are—customs bewitching, and examples dangerous;—not to forget too, that steering safe of these shoals and quicksands is the highest ambition of the *many*; and, what with their utmost industry, they but rarely attain to. The *few*, however, are not to be contented therewith, as being appointed by Providence to something more: and for as much as we are all of us linked together, as it were, in the same chain—have most of the same wants—and much of the same weakness, one as the other—I question if an entire apathy be reconcileable to the
 prin-

principles of rationality; as those of Christianity we are sure disallow of it. *Here* then the nail *will* not go, nor indeed is it in my scheme to attempt *driving* it; the impediments to a virtuous and good life arising more frequently, as I conceive, from a loose and careless insensibility with regard to the *little* world *within*, than from any inordinate passion for the concerns of the *great* world *without* us; or both conspiring, as they often do, to the same unhappy end, the *latter* may be looked on as an excrescence growing out of, and chiefly owing to, the *former*—To rectify the preconceived mistakes of the *one*, will in course be a great step towards preventing or curing the excesses of the *other*; to which method, neither *unconditionally*

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embracing,

embracing, nor yet *absolutely* rejecting the stoicks opinion, I mean to confine myself, in the following disquisition. From the *best* observations I have had opportunity of making during my whole life, it is with me become a fixed and settled notion, that as *low* habits in general, so *idle* ones in particular, are the *hardest* things imaginable to get rid of: even from *vicious* ones, *less* opposition in the struggle may be expected. Whether it is, that in the two *former* cases, an imaginary and presumed innocence goes a great way in hardening the human breast against such endeavours as are calculated to set it right; whereas in the *last*, vice is too shocking and offensive to be daringly justified, or even long to be persisted in, in open defiance of those rebukes

rebukes with which reason and religion enable us to attack it;—or for what other cause it is [custom *only*, we may be certain, it cannot be, which operates alike every where; and therefore to the clearing up this difficulty, nothing may be thence inferred] I will not presume to determine; the fact however is incontestibly true, though I do not recollect the subject to have been so characteristically criticized by any one before me. Now, as the perfection of education consists in treasuring up a valuable stock of ideas, which, with the improvement and increase continually made thereto, may be an inexhaustible and lasting fund for the exercise and employment of the mental faculties in *all* subsequent times; so a *judicious* disposition, and a *wise* appropri-

propriation, of your hours *afterwards*, when experience and reflection have fully ripened the judgment, to *retain* and to *reject*, what *is* and *is not* fitting for your purpose; I affirm to be the *only* security you can have, that none of them will be misapplied or totally useless: for want of which, much good erudition is lost entirely, and not a little, accommodated to vain—trifling—and insignificant—and it is well if they are not wicked and dangerous pursuits. I remember an acquaintance of ours, whose way of thinking was, with you, in some repute, even for its singularity, used to declare, “ he had rather see his boys *busy*, though it was out of their proper sphere, and doing *that*, in strictness they should *not* have done, when, because of

the short-sightedness of those intrusted with their management, a whipping was sure to be the consequence—than that they should purchase indemnity, and what he called *dear-bought* favour, at the expence of their *natural*, and therefore *commendable*, activity: there being not so *much* connection, he would aver, between *these* petty and inconsiderable transgressions, as *children*, and their turning out good for nothing, when arrived to *manhood*, as betwixt the latter and a *wayward* abstinence, through an indulged stupidity or a studied laziness, from the extravagant feats and variegated gambols of those, their equals in age and quality—Of *such* import, added he, is it, that there should be no propensity to illeness at the very entrance into life,
and

and at an age when the most assiduous industry can, *of itself*, turn not to the least possible avail!" The remark is extremely *just*, and, allowance made for alteration of circumstances, may be extended to every stage thereof. And this will be granted to be no uncharitable way of accounting for that *affected* drowfiness of constitution, and very offensive indifference, as to their nearest concerns, observable in *those* who make no consideration of time, any farther than to retaliate thereon *particularly*, the *general* waste *it* makes, sooner or later, on the whole species. Doing *nothing*, however, or what is pretty much the same thing, that which is *nothing worth*, bad as we acknowledge it to be, and infinitely derogating from the honour and dignity of a rational creature, is nevertheless of

two evils the *least*, in this case, to be expected : as doing what is *worse* than *nothing*, viz. something to the detriment of ourselves or others, supercedes *omission* [if in truth it doth supersede it] only by *commission*. But I apprehend one to be so nigh of kin to the other, that, as proceeding from the same source, *neither* is easily to be avoided, where there is such an aptness for *both* : it is time to consider of the cure. As *new* and paradoxical as it may seem, I am bold to say, that a *vacancy* from employment is the *cause*, oftener than the *effect*, of a *vacancy* from thought ; or, which amounts to the same, of such *inconsiderateness*, as is productive of those numerous oversights by which we distress ourselves or others—pervert the order and designs of Providence—and become a blot, or a
chasm

chasm at least, in the works of the creation ! And yet I know not by what kind of fatality it hath happened, that *most* who have wrote on this subject have gone on in the *old* beaten track, of mistaking *one* for the *other* ; whereas a very small degree of attention might have set them right. When an *able* minister of state, and an *amiable* lady of quality, whom I have in my eye, are in earnest employed ; the former in giving his sovereign, sound, wholesome, and disinterested advice—in regulating the finances—in contriving new securities for British liberty—or in planning expeditions to annoy his country's foes—the latter in providentially looking after her lord's domestick affairs—or inspecting the education and behaviour of her daughters — or keeping within due bounds those who, by an excess of indulgence,

dulgence, might prove too *mighty* for their maintainers—when an industrious and pains-taking husbandman is scarce ever without the implements of his calling in his hand—and honest Dol the dairy-maid knows not what an absence, for any continuance, from her butter and cheese means—in *these*, and in all *such like* instances, there is no want of an Arthur's gaming-table, and a sing-song opera, to engage the lady and the gentleman—or of a wake and a cudgel-match, to divert the peasants. It is to idleness we are indebted for excentrical and out-of-the-way extravagancies, in *every* shape and of *every* degree: but in all this there appears to be no *want* of thought, such as it is; so far from it, that, odd and unaccountable as at first-hearing it may sound, *ways* and *means* of dissipation
are

are studied and sought after, by the unemployed and indolent, with more intenseness and much stronger application, than would serve, properly directed, to secure families and preserve nations from destruction. This, in truth, is thinking to *none*, or to a *bad* purpose, which I do not deny—but it is thinking still. All I aim at proving hereby, is the absurdity of imputing errors in conduct to that *originally*, as its first *cause*, which but very rarely subsists—and, when it does so, we ought not to look upon it otherwise than as an *effect* of what it hath generally been *wrongfully* supposed a *cause*. In farther confirmation of this *late* discovered secret, it will be found upon enquiry, that the very *best* disposed do sometimes fall into disorders, and into an impropriety

of conduct, inconsistent with the whole tenour of their *former* behaviour, from being occasionally, either through love, despair, disappointment, disgust, or for some other reason, under the influence of a kind of lethargick inactivity; which, when seasonably roused, they soon grow ashamed of, and get the better of, *only* by having recourse, upon *their own* reflection, to their *usual* studies or occupation—whereas, I believe, it was never noted, that a perfectly lazy, negligent, and unemployed person hath been induced to betake himself, from an *habitual* indolence, to a *proper* industry, by *his own* reasoning, and from *his own* sense of things—which must have happened in *this* case, as well as in the *other*, if idleness did not totally suppress, impede, or in some degree pervert, the
use

use and exercise of the intellectual faculties. But I ask pardon for entering so deeply into, and refining, as I have done, upon *this* subject, when writing to a lady—especially being under a sort of engagement, at the beginning of my epistle, to do otherwise. Yet why should I apologize? since it is worth a little out-of-the-way labour, to both writer and reader, to have this question impartially examined into and settled—and you want neither resolution nor acuteness, to go step by step with me to the bottom of far more perplexing difficulties. But I am coming to the *point* from whence I may be thought to have digressed. That you may keep *free* of such inconveniencies as I lay down to be the natural result of idleness and inactivity--*need* no expensive and dangerous dissipations

dissipations whereon to *waste* vacant
 hours—and be *out* of the reach of temp-
 tations, which your nature in its pre-
 sent state of innocence would startle but
 to think of—that you may be enabled,
 with God's grace, to persevere in a con-
 tinued course of performing, with pro-
 priety and dignity, as with profit and
 delight, the matronly duties of wife and
 mother—steward and oeconomist—part-
 ner and fellow-labourer—friend and com-
 panion—of him whom it is your lot to
 accompany through life—study to *divide*
 and *parcel out* your time in such a man-
 ner, as never to have it *lye upon hand*.
 It is the peculiar happiness of *your* sex,
 that those family-concerns which ought
 to engross its attention *most*, are so va-
 rious and complicated, as to be neither
 tedious and fatiating, nor yet unpleasant ;
 add

add to these, such *harmless* and *pertinent* relaxations, as the most rigid casuists will not disapprove of, and which human nature requires to be indulged with; and the sum total of both will amount to a *mass* scarce conceivable! Sure I am, to one who considers the *whole* of this attentively, every complaint of slow and tiresome *summer-days*, and of long *winter-evenings*, will be entirely superseded. Yet to rid themselves of these, or to render them more supportable, with what eagerness do people fly to *expedients* the most absurd and most unnatural? *expedients* which, tho' they may, in some degree, answer *present* purpose, are sure, after a while, to become as distasteful and irksome, as *what* they were introduced in relief of! To the jaundiced eye, it is a trite observation,

vation, that all objects appear but of one colour, and that not the most agreeable—and, wherever the human mind is at variance with itself, *incapable*, thro' conscious guilt, or *unwilling*, from affected indolence, to be occupied in *those* ways to which it is *naturally* suited—variety of amusements will be far from effecting a cure: and, like as a distempered constitution, nauseated with a load of useless drugs injudiciously administered, incurs a *new* and an additional danger from every *fresh* application of the same kind; so is the *internal* habit, if I may be allowed the expression, daily growing from *bad* to *worse*, when it hath no *resources*, but *those* here disallowed of, to fly to. Should any one, in the way of objection, affect to ridicule the activity here recommended—and laugh
at

at the assignment of a married lady's time to the conduct of her *domestick* affairs ; which, with regard to *private* families, when once brought into a *regular* order and method, are superintended, inspected, and governed, by an assiduity and care so inconsiderable and easy, as to be inadequate to, and not sufficient for, the *notable* end proposed—I shall readily agree with the objector, that method being the very life and soul of business, will indeed lessen its weight and incumbrance much in all cases ; nor shall it want any encouragement or encomium I may have power to give it ; however, it cannot be denied that the inducement to a person's doing her duty is not a little augmented from this very consideration, of its being practicable without pain or uneasiness. But the objection,

admitted

admitted in its full force, does by no means make against us; which to be convinced of, you need only recollect, that the ladies are furnished with *ample* means of exercising themselves in bar to that *stagnation* so *perillous* to those who indulge it—even on a supposition that the care of a family, attended to as it ought to be, should not call for so much of their *precious* time as good husbands are content with allowing them for that use. I forbear therefore to offend your *delicacy* with hints of *some* additional and extraordinary concerns, which it is not impossible that every year, of many to come, may superinduce to the former.—so that a penny at first, as we proverbially say, may in the end amount to a pound! The *expedients* I refer to are of two sorts—

the *one* in common to you with the serious and well-disposed of our sex; the *other* peculiarly feminine; and therefore it might be wondered at if we disregarded it: these are *reading* and *working*, which may be advanced to *any* height, and carried on to *any* extent desired, by *those* solicitous not to be out of employment. Though to some the latter may appear too *mean* a subject to be descanted on in so serious a performance as this; I cannot help being of another mind, and thinking, with your favourite author the Spectator, that it is of importance enough to be considered, at least in the abstract, when we are laying out systems and prescribing rules for *that* sex, to whom in an *especial* manner it belongs—but it requires a spirit and vein of humour equal to *those* of the inimitable

imitable writer just mentioned, to attempt a recommendation of the *several* particulars whereof it ought to consist; it is sufficient for my purpose to have it granted *generally*, that the exercise of those pretty and ingenious implements of industry, the thimble and the needle, is by no means unworthy the fingers of ladies of the first rank and quality—that it is a harmless recreation, and also one of profit and delight—and may, as an *alterative*, be judiciously adapted, at *certain* seasons, to the maintenance of the female constitution in its due and proper *crasis*—farther than that, this deponent saith not: nor, I believe, should I have ventured thus far out of my sphere; but that, in *some* very reputable families where you and I are acquainted, I know a *different* opinion hath been given into,
which

which I wish *its* abettors and encouragers may never have room to repent of; and whose examples, in that respect, I would caution *you* and *yours* against being influenced by. In favour of books, a great deal more may be said—in as much as the use and application thereof are calculated for *future* emolument, equally with the *present*; which is not the case *universally*, and *without exceptions*, in the *other*. I have often reflected with concern on the *partiality* of parents towards their offspring—that, not content with bestowing estates, honours, and titles upon their *sons*, for which there may in the reason and nature of things be found some pretence; and that, without regard enough had to their merit and behaviour—they are so unreasonable, as to deny their *daughters* the opportunity of

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improving *those* talents Providence hath blessed them with, certainly not with an intent *they* should be overlooked and slighted! For if we except dancing—playing on the spinnet—and a few more inconsiderable *external* embellishments, those of the better sort are superficially enough, God knows, favoured with in the ordinary way of boarding schools—what is there, besides *reading* and *writing*, in the *first* and *literal* meaning of these words, by which *their* education differeth from that of the *lowest* and *poorest* mechanics daughters? who yet, now and then, by some chance or other, arrive to the art of *scrawling* their letters, or of *drawling* out a chapter in the New Testament, provided there be no *hard* names in it, with as *commendable* an air, and to as *good* a purpose, as some
of

of those much above them! This may be looked on as no *decent* or *seemly* representation, with regard to *that* sex, with *whom*, in some part of our lives, we every one of us are desirous of having connexions, and on *whom* much of our ease and comfort depends. But, let me ask, who are *mostly* to blame, *they* who by their imprudent management give occasion to *such* censures, or *others*, who by fairly representing things as they are, evidence an earnest desire to have them amended? It is little to the purpose to say, as some have most rudely and inadvertently done, that the sex in general is, by nature, fitted for nothing higher—the truth of which bold assertion I flatly deny. But even on *such* a supposition, the practice I condemn is not unexception-

tionably defensible—I know of *whom* I write; and I am as well assured as I can be of any thing, not experimentally settled, out of the reach of controversy, that *many* of your lovely sex, for the restraint of whose genius I am grieved, are capacitated, by the help of a more extensive and enlarged education, to turn reading and the contemplation of valuable authors to as profitable an account as the generality of those who wear breeches—and, to this, have *wiled* away a year or two in either university. This subject, however, I own, wants *some* explanation: a mood-and-figure-wife, qualified, in her own imagination, to talk over the *abstrusest* points in logick, mathematicks, and in natural philosophy, with Mr. Locke, with Dr. Clarke, and with Sir Isaac Newton, is most certainly no desirable

firable thing—and a *classical* bedfellow,
 arrived at the *acuteness* and *self-sufficiency*
 of a Bently, is what no man would
 covet—and forasmuch as we have no
 author of *repute* among those of anti-
 quity who is not, to some degree of ex-
 actness, *translated, rendered, or done in-*
to the modern languages ; I contend not
 for sending our *forward* and *sprightly*
 daughters to Eaton or Westminster, to
learn Greek and Latin—Even the *inno-*
cent [as some think it] acquaintance of
 the muses, though of the *same* sex, I
 should never or but very rarely recom-
 mend to pretty miss's choice—What then?
 Is it of no consequence, think you, to be
 able, by dint of *early* instruction, to rea-
 son justly upon *common* topicks ? Some
 knowledge of geography and chrono-
 G 3 logy,

logy, with a tolerable insight into history, both general and particular, would certainly do no harm—If to *these* acquisitions, which are far from being *useless* and *unpleasant*, a *more perfect* skill in the several arithmetical rules—enough of perspective not to be at a loss in taking a draught or in copying a landscape—and of natural philosophy, *whereby* to assist vegetation and the culture of a flower-garden, were added—a sedentary and retired life, such as is that of our wives and daughters for the most part, would be less irksome to them, than a rainy day to their sons and brothers, who in the country draw their *vital* subsistence from the *turf*, the *powder-flask*, and the *chase*; and in town, I fear, are not so well employed. I myself have been a witness to the grateful acknowledgments
some

Some of your sex have confessed themselves under to books, in times of the most poignant and cutting distresses! May you have no occasion for them on *that* account, but it is good to be provided against the *worst* that can happen. Give me leave to close this letter with a piece of criticism on a passage of our celebrated Milton, in his Paradise Lost—not in view to recommending *that* art to the ladies, which I profess myself to be no *great* adept in—and it is *less* suited still to female constitutions—but because it hath *immediate* relation, as understood by me, to the *point* now under our consideration. The passage I mean is in the eighth book, and hath not been considered by the criticks in the light I am about to speak of it, for want, I apprehend, of due attention to the author's

peculiar case and circumstances—which, it may not be improper to observe to you once for all, many times serve to explain a writer's sense and meaning beyond any thing else—though, it is true, they have not been wanting to cry it up for a masterpiece, as no doubt it is in other respects—which, however, it is foreign from my purpose to particularize in this place—You will there see the mother of us all represented with admirable art and judgment, as voluntarily withdrawing herself from a serious conversation betwixt the angel and her lord, in the following lines—which are worthy to be wrote in letters of gold over the closet-door of every married woman, her daughter—

Yet went not she, as not with such discourse
Delighted, or not capable her ear

Of

Of what was high—Such pleasure she reserv'd,
 Adam relating, the sole auditress;
 Her husband the relater, she preferr'd,
 Before an angel—and of him to ask
 Close rather—he, she knew, would intermix
 Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute,
 With conjugal caresses—From his lip
 Not words *alone* pleas'd her—O when meet now
 Such pairs, in love and mutual honour join'd!

Milton's unhappiness, through the loss of his eye-sight, is discoverable in many parts of this incomparable performance—that he was a studious man and a great writer is likewise no secret—but that he was very unfortunate in his marriage may not be so generally known—This however the writer of his life as-
 sureth us of; and the grand position of one of his treatises, composed expressly in favour of, and to countenance, di-
 vorces,

vices, viz. that “indisposition, unfitness, or contrariety of mind, arising from a cause in nature unchangeable, hindering, and ever likely to hinder, the main benefits of conjugal society, which are *solace* and *peace*, is the greatest reason of divorce,” &c. puts the matter quite out of dispute. Under these *crosses*, *disadvantageous*, and *perplexing* circumstances, it will by all be agreed to be most *natural* in him, to throw out the *general* reflection, with which the above-recited passage concludes. May he not also be conceived to hint, though *remote*ly, at the *necessity* bookish men are under of being frequently *separated* from those they love *best*, because of the nature of their studies, which will not admit of *those* interruptions, that, at a fitter time,
are

are both natural and full of delight—and also at the inconveniency of spending lonely hours, and among books, without a sweet and entertaining *companion*, at proper intervals, to associate with? I add, that upon the same principle, he seems desirous *herely* of instructing all wives to *husband* every adventure to the best advantage for promoting afterwards a conversation too apt to flag and grow dull, when man and wife are left, as they sometimes must be, to themselves. Whether this criticism be just or otherwise, I shall not be sorry for having given into it, as it furnisheth me with an opportunity of enforcing this general observation—that, as the hours of matrimony are far from being equal and alike, and tempers as variable

able too; insomuch that what we *passionately* wish for at one time, at another ceaseth being agreeable; the accustoming ourselves to read good and approved authors, when we are qualified for it, not only hath the advantage, in common with other employments, of filling up a portion of our time when alone; but it moreover enables us to be better company, more conversible, and more entertaining, as oft as we are obliged to spend any of it with those, to whom we are bound, in duty and interest, to study being acceptable and pleasing. I am, &c.

L E T-

LETTER IV.

Dear Madam,

THE *dreadful* disorder with which
I am exceedingly alarmed to hear
it hath pleased God to visit you, hav-
ing *unexpectedly* interrupted the course
of these letters—and because of the
uncertainty, whether there may hereafter
be room for resuming the subject, in
order to go through the several heads
proposed or not. I shall in the interim
attempt

attempt filling up the chasm, neither unsuitably to the event that occasions it; nor yet in such a manner, as at your recovery, which no one more sincerely and more ardently prays for, to discredit, on account of its *lesser* value and importance, *those* strictures that have gone before, or *those* that are, God willing, to follow after: so that if what I have already written ever come to your knowledge, as Heaven grant it may, I trust you will not be displeased, as a good Christian, to find it thus accompanied. On the other hand, should that really happen, which disquieteth me but to think possible; and should I be constrained to give over these exercises of the pen, which, thro' the vehement desire I have of pleasing and serving you, were not without their *agreeableness*;

ness; something, at least, I shall retain by way of consolation in this my extreme affliction, to wit, the consciousness of having in imagination attended your last moments, with an attachment and warmth of friendship inviolate, as what I have ever made pretence to—and with a propriety not to be censured by the most invidious or ill-natured! As your *future* life then, to which *these* papers have a reference, must in course be inevitably chequered with sickness and health—with fortunate and unfortunate events—with unexpected successes at one time, and casual disappointments at another—in what you undertake or have most at heart; to as great a degree as, not unlikely, more so than, any other period of those years past gone and forgotten—fortify your mind against

that superlative weakness of the sex, which subjects it to immoderate and indecent transports of joy and sorrow on these *reverses* of fortune, which in this fickle and unsteady situation of ours—a situation exposed to such a multitude of contingencies, internally and externally, it is but natural to look for: and that in proportion as the union you are about to contract demands it of you, by reason of the complicated nature and tendency of *such* a deportment, to the involving *others*, equally with *yourself*, in the consequences. She who hath connections like *those* peculiar to the married state, is under an indispensable obligation of opening her views and extending her prospects not a little: as her every thought, word and action, must reverberate, if I may be permitted to

to

to use that expression, from herself to others, who will be honoured or dishonoured, benefited or injured, *thereby*; she is not at liberty to consult her own gratification solely or principally in them: and though the result of any imprudent resolution be perhaps nothing more than the discomposure of a set of features, which she is but joint-proprietor of with another; forasmuch as her tenure is no better, even *this* is what she cannot justify: and much stronger objection is there to her persevering, for *any* cause, or from *any* motive whatever, in such extravagancies, as may render her unfit to discharge the several duties incumbent on others of like rank, circumstances, and condition. The ways of Providence are so mysterious, and also in wisdom so consummate—who

can say that the calamity you are at present undergoing, whose effects, when not mortal, do frequently leave an intense and lasting remembrance behind them, to which the ladies are *least* reconcileable of *any*—at a crisis too, when, consistently with the severest rules of modesty and good breeding, expectation may, I should more properly say must, have been agreeably flattered with the dawning prospect of *that* happiness, which the good and virtuous of your sex are well entitled to promise themselves—who, I repeat it, on such an enlarged and complex view of things, can knowingly determine if the small pox, with all its apparent sharpness and seeming rigour, be not *that* method of discipline and instruction judged most

conve-

convenient by an unerring Deity, to bring you to him, by forming your mind to a right way of thinking, in all that is *henceforward* to be your lot; and to prepare you for impressions of such deep force and lasting efficacy as will never be eradicated or shaken, amidst the manifest vicissitudes, and no less certain *travail*, of what is represented to be most emphatically a *militant* life? Reflexions of this sort, believe me, dear Miss —, are neither forced nor unnatural; but, on the contrary, such as, capacitated in the *manner* you are, with the best of understandings to profit by, it would be preposterous, and even wicked, to stifle and suppress. For, upon this principle, you may propose a kind of system for your *future* conduct, con-

fructed not quite so hypothetically as systems usually are, but on the firm and solid basis of experience—by the maxims of the soundest philosophy—and under the influence of the purest religion. I, for my part, have ever had a propensity to thinking, in the language of our most admired poet, that “ whatever is, is right ;” which opinion if you are of, you must also agree with me, that not to turn to some good account, and not to make a profitable use of every occurrence, is, in some sense, to oppose our Maker’s will, to slight and undervalue his laws, and to turn rebel, like the first and grand deceiver, against his appointments. The only specious objection I can think of to this way of reasoning [an objection however scarce

scarce deserving notice] is the impossibility of coming to any certainty, and the difficulty of always judging truly and as we ought, in such matters: but in the instance before us, we are not on a more precarious footing than in all others; nor are we indeed required, by any dictates of reason or religion that I am apprized of, to be unerring and infallible in the judgments we form of, and in our reasoning upon, and from them. Was that the case, our *least* deviations from rectitude and truth, with an infinitely perfect God, could not admit of pardon! Whereas, liable as we are by nature and custom to be deceived, offers of the divine grace notwithstanding, our *greatest*, under the gospel-dispensation, and on the terms of

faith and repentance, ought not to despair of it. A sincere and ardent endeavour at coming to a right way of thinking, and of improving to the utmost of our capacity, whatever, in the ordinary or extraordinary course of nature, we find ourselves affected by, seems to comprehend, if not the whole of our duty, which without more information than we are blessed with, it would be presumptuous to affirm, yet enough of it to make our calling and election sure, with a gracious and merciful Redeemer. But the issue of things, after all, must remain in, and with, the *one* eternal, omnipotent, and immutable Being—creator of all things, and judge of all men—their actions, words, thoughts, and intentions. The whole of this, as it was well understood, so have I met
 with

with it elegantly expressed by a late author, whose works I see you a subscriber to, and therefore am to suppose you have read.—“After the utmost we can do, says Dr. Conybear, in one of his sermons, towards the attainment [of what we propose] our success must be uncertain—Perhaps we ourselves may err in the measures we pursue—or accidents, which we could not foresee, may disappoint us—or, the interfering interests of other men may break in upon us—or, as it sometimes happens, envy and malice, unprovoked and unsuspected, may entirely defeat our expectations.”—[This, I would observe, is equally true of spiritual as of temporal advantages, to which the doctor’s subject confined him]. And in his charge to the clergy of his diocese he hath the following passage, expressly to our purpose

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pose—"The events of things not being at our command, our most gracious Master will rather consider what we resolutely endeavoured, than what we have successfully performed." The objection then, however at first sight plausible, being of no weight in any case, as you cannot but perceive by this short examination thereof, that which brought on the enquiry must be acknowledged, of so serious a nature—so full of incidents—and so deeply affecting, as to furnish a speculating genius with abundant matter whereon to be advantageously employed, and consequently it merits a more than common attention. I have somewhere read, "that the last sighs of an expiring beauty are for the loss of her charms." Ludicrous as the expression may seem, so much, I apprehend,

is thereby meant, as will justify the observation already made, or at least hinted at, in this letter; “ that there are few misfortunes so poignant—which the fair sex is so perfectly sensible of, and of which the recollection sticks by it so close and so long, as those which threaten a diminution in quantity or quality, of attractions and accomplishments merely personal:” neither is it altogether strange or unreasonable, provided a due medium be kept, that the ladies should value themselves *upon* that which the men, for the most part, are disposed to value them *for*. In this your own sense of things, which I wish you to moderate only, and not to annihilate—and which I can easily consent to your admitting of, in conjunction with, not exclusive of,

other

other considerations at the same time—
 In this your own sense of things, I say; you will, at the present juncture, have to draw very opposite and useful, moral and religious inferences both, from one of the two following cases; if it shall please God, of his mercy, to be kind to us all, in sparing your valuable life: either your escape may be such as will be attended with no bad consequences, no, not so little as the robbing you of a dimple—which is a rare Providence indeed, but what hath been known sometimes to happen—or after a tedious struggle betwixt nature and the disease [the doctor perhaps, through design or ignorance, taking part, to the longer continuance of the contest, now on one side, and now on the other] you may have the luck to continue among us,
 with

with a shattered and impaired constitution—a countenance expressive of imaginary, less than real, sufferings—and [such are the unaccountable effects produced on the animal spirits, not only by disorders themselves, but too often by the medicines applied for their relief] with a remembrance of what you was, barely sufficient to incense you to the state and condition you are henceforth to continue in! O may my foreboding spirit cease, from picturing to the affrighted imagination a spectacle so full of horror! Nor ever let the representation of this distressed and doleful scene be mixed in Lili's fate, by the reality of which it might frighten him to much beyond what is fit. To judge of your interest in her own—the issue, be it more or less fortunate, cannot fail proving

proving to you an inexhaustible fund
 of the most sublime, and the most tran-
 scendently glorious, excellencies : and if
 your future relations are not of a make
 by themselves, it will present them with
 a pleasing anticipation of the happiness
 to which they are reserved. Permit me,
 serious above measure and moralizing
 as my present humour is, and such the
 occasion requires, to expatiate some-
 what on this head; and to point out
 more particularly, what is obvious and
 necessary to have remarked; with re-
 gard to that state, the accident we are
 revolving must a while delay, but will
 not, I hope, prevent, your entering in-
 to, in due time, with the *same* well-
 founded hope and assurances, or even
better, than if it had never happened.
 In the first place, be the disappointment
 incon-

inconsiderable or much, which is too delicate and nice a question for me to resolve on enquiring into—it cannot but be looked on as a trial, in some sort, of your disposition and temper; such a one too, as not having ever had the like opportunity of undergoing, until now, you are not to expect the vigilant eyes of those about you will pass over disregarded—and less still, that the person principally interested, as in the *end* of this conflict, so in the decency and propriety of your behaviour, in and under it, will be backward or remiss in making his observations on; which, of all things, it becometh you to be sure, as will be to your advantage. Picture to yourself a fond lover, under the impatience peculiar to such, riveted to you faster than

than ever, not only by the consideration of your present sufferings, which is a motive common to him with others your relations, friends, and acquaintance—not only through affection, which in many instances so warps and perverts the judgment, it is not to be relied on with credit, or even with safety—but with the cords of a man sensible of what importance it is that the object of his choice should appear to the world worthy herself, worthy him! who will reflect, that whatever personal charms it may be your fortune to be deprived of, by this so severe a stroke—provided a proper use be made thereof, will be amply recompensed to him, by the discovery of those more valuable perfections of the mind, which constitute the refined and

and humble Christian—the meek and forbearing wife—the tender and affectionate mother—with the endearing companion and considerate friend! Such a group of accomplishments rarely meeting in one and the same person, and yet every one of them so greatly a future spouse's desire and endeavour to be assured of, that any attempt to succeed in being believed the mistress of them, on a less critical occasion, had, to a quick-sighted observer, shewed more of art than of nature in it; and, not improbably, been interpreted as owing to the sage lectures of some elderly matron of the family, of long experience in the ways of the world, and who, in respect thereof, might well be supposed to have been a necessary prompter behind the curtain. But, by a discreet management,

ment, you will remove all suspicion of contrivance and premeditated design; and farther still, you have it in your power, for the honour of the sex, to blast the ill-sounding imputation on female education in general; as calculated for deception throughout, more for show than for use, and to recommend appearances for realities. Thus, on a supposition, that to gain or to secure conquest was a young lady's principal aim; she might, by the means I have prescribed to you, hit the intended mark, with equal, or even with greater certainty, and with far superior delicacy, than is practicable by any other rules. The reverse of all here recommended falling out; that is, should any impropriety of conduct, proceeding from indecency

decency or indelicacy, characterize this, the most observable, if not the most busy, scene of your vital *drama*—any distinguishable marks of inability to bear up with patience, or of unconformity to discipline, whilst under the lash of Providence, escape you—any inordinate anxiety about what the poet calls, “a set of features, or the tincture of a skin,” supersede and take place of, more just, more natural, and more suitable reflections—I leave you to imagine the consequence! Will it not, think you, occasion something worse than surprise, in him whom I have supposed to have your image impressed on his breast—and your reputation and credit as much at heart as his own—to learn he hath made an erroneous judgment of your prudence; and imputed to you,

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together

together with other laudable qualities, an evenness of temper and an uniformity of behaviour, subsisting but in his own ideas? And may not such a degree of doubt, not to say diffidence, arise therefrom, as to stagger the resolution, and lessen the ardour of a thoughtful, however predetermined, lover? An effect this, I am bold to affirm, unwilling as you may be to hear it, no other than is consistent with the warmest and purest sentiments of love and honour—and the apprehension of which ought to affect you, in the same degree, as the marks of a just and warrantable passion, have, in him, to your thinking, appeared real and unquestionable. The dilemma then you are reduced to, is plainly this—either to study and observe such a conduct

duct as will bear the severest scrutiny, and from which you have much to hope and nothing to fear; or, leaving all to the chapter of accidents, to rely on the inexcusable indifference of one, possibly possessed of no small share in your affection, to have any weakness or wilfulness, you may, at so extraordinary a juncture, be guilty of, overlooked. On which latter condition, I much question if any lady of true sensibility would be content with compounding for the *least*, or accepting a compleat indemnity for the *greatest*, oversight she ever committed. Nor are you to deceive yourself, under a persuasion, that any improper behaviour *now* hath a chance to be forgotten *hereafter*; though, fortunately for your present purpose, as will be supposed, there may be no external

evidence of its having been noticed, at the time, by the spectator so often mentioned: for it is but too true, that in the conversation between married persons, especially where the greatest harmony doth not *uninterruptedly* subsist, we are often disagreeably entertained with allusions to acts of indiscretion and levity, very distant in time, and more so, if possible, from the aggressor's apprehension of being a sufferer thereby. Indeed, in the nature of things, it cannot well happen otherwise, but that as sure as disputes arise, so sure an unkind retrospect will be indulged by *one* of the parties, greatly to the disadvantage of the *other*, in reference to transactions of the *same*, or of a *similar*, kind with *those* then on the carpet; which *neither* thinking themselves bound to estimate and determine of,

or, with the *like* gentleness and partiality as *before*, passion, resentment or spleen may aggravate, to a most amazing height, and far beyond what the point in question deserveth. In the same manner, as instances of prudence, complacency and good humour, become, under a wise and provident management, a sort of bank, whereto to have recourse for many years to come, in the way of heightening and improving the peculiar delights of an intimate, close and unre-served union. But secondly, independent of the consideration hitherto insisted on, which, as best consisting with my *present* design, it would not have been right in me to slur over, or inattentively or negligently—it may be rested on as an established maxim with phi-

losophers, moralists and divines, of every age and of all countries, that a serenity of temper, inaccessible equally to fortune, in her best and in her worst airs, is the strongest support, when joined to a good conscience, in passing through this vale of misery, to that perfecter state, where we are told, without marrying or giving in marriage, true joys are only to be found. As I am satisfied of the *one*, let me have no doubt of the *other*—You that have nothing to reproach or charge yourself with, human frailties excepted, ought to be the last to distrust that kind and beneficent Being, under whose protection you have *hitherto* been preserved in innocence—and as such a milkiness of disposition, suited to all circumstances and to every station, seem-

eth not of difficult attainment, at least in a moderate degree; for want of which, the greatest blessings in life are but as sumptuous and costly dresses to an infirm and sickly constitution, but too much oppressed with, and ready to sink under, its own weight—and the ordinary troubles and traverses, to which our nature is universally exposed, a burthen quite intolerable—So is there no season so fit to cultivate and ripen the seeds of *this* most excellent and most useful virtue in us, as *that* wherein the body being clogged with *some* notable infirmity, and the passions, in consequence thereof, *less* importunate than usual to be gratified—the intellectual faculties unimpaired, in the mean while, and unrestrained from performing their

wanted offices—the soul is better disposed, and more at liberty to exert itself in spiritual contemplations, and on making enquiries into its *own* nature and properties, and hath larger opportunities of consulting its real good: a drudgery, as, in opposition to the repeated calls of reason and religion, it is most shamefully believed, and therefore but rarely submitted to, in perfect health, and in full swing of worldly enjoyments! Thus are the less desirable, equally with the more pleasing and coveted, dispensations of Providence, calculated entirely for the benefit of the creature; and never fail proving so, but when, through pretended blindness or laboured perverseness in the object affected, the order of things is maliciously inverted, and of a
reviving

reviving and wholesome medicine naturally, is constituted a rank, destructive, and deadly poison! To what purpose then [may any one object] repining under misfortunes, such as sickness, poverty and distress—or even endeavouring to avert or cure them—each of which may, or may not, prove of disadvantage? The doctrine *thus* insinuated, might, I confess, to more perfect beings than we are, be better recommended, on the footing of utility, decency, and duty: though it is, with me, matter of doubt, if any created *ones* can possibly be reconciled to such a way of thinking. Pain, whether of body or mind, and whatever else we are sufferers by, cannot but be unengaging and uninviting: and if it brings with it danger, contempt

and

and disgrace likewise, no arguments will persuade a reasonable creature, that it may not, with his utmost application and industry, be avoided. All that I contend for on *this* head, may be reduced to the following position, viz. not that we are forbid making resistance, as long as resistance seems, in any degree, available, to such crosses as assail us—which is a most absurd and unnatural tenet—but that, when under oppression of any kind, to which chance—our own mismanagement—secret causes—or the inscrutable views of Providence, have subjected us; our business is, to suffer with decency, and our duty, to improve from our very sufferings. Were I less ambitious of copying from nature in *these* strictures, than of transcribing passages

passages out of books, in confirmation
 of what is *here* advanced, it were easy
 to fill many pages with apophthegms,
 sentences, and remarks—and at every
 turn to quote Seneca, Epictetus, and
 Plutarch, with other such gentry, on
 the same side with myself in this dis-
 pute. Great and venerable names these,
 it is true, but whose authority a fine
 young lady, as you are, may have some
 scruple about acknowledging—Nor am I
 quite sure those of the baronet—the doc-
 tor—the esquire and the captain—will
 not have more deference paid them!
 from whom, and a million besides, anx-
 ious for Miss ——'s recovery, I can
 fancy myself deputed, as authentically
 as if there were letters-patent under the
 broad

broad seal [for who is there, among those who know you, of whom it may not be presumed?] with vows, supplications, and tears—imploing that your next appearance, after having successfully waded through your present difficulty, may be, not only in safety, but with a dignity corresponding in every respect with that, by which, in all the periods of your life, you have been distinguished—that your merit may arise, transcendently bright, from your inimitable resolution and constancy in the time of danger, as silver purified from the furnace—And finally, to crown a labour of so much goodness, that you may attain your utmost wishes in this world, and compleat your felicity hereafter,

after, accompanied with those aspiring
like yourself, to supereminent excel-
lency, in the desirable regions of bliss
and immortality !

December the
23d, 1757.

F R I E N D S H I P :

T O

L Æ L I U S.

*Extremum hunc, Arethusa, mihi concede laborem,
Pauca meo Gallo——*

IS there, in life, kind Heaven's *first* bequest,
A boon, more valuable than *all* the rest?
Choicer than gold, the produce of one soil—
Surpassing pearl, got with excess of toil—
Yet through the universe, to each degree
Of mortals, unconfin'd as air, and free—
Which exquisite delight or comfort brings,
To hero's—wits—philosophers—and kings—

Ev'n

Ev'n in a cott, sure happiness affords,
 Equalling beggars brats, to heirs of lords—
 Which *adverse* fortune tempers and allays,
 But doubly gilds *serene* and *prosperous* days—
 Who grants not *this*, my Lælius, is not true
 To friendship—ne'er had *such* a friend as you!

Whence comes it then, a principle so *just*,
 To stand all tests, is taken upon *truth*?
 That reas'ners on the point, in *gen'ral* deal,
 Not from experience and from what they *feel*?
 Whilst, all admitting friendship's cordial *end*,
 'Tis *rare* to gain, and to preserve, a friend.

Is it that nature, of her own decree
 Regardless, fears to be *felo-de-se*?
 Fears, *second* self may have *unnat'ral* thirst
 To forming plans, destructive of the first?
 Or, is it, that the reins to friendship given,
 'Tis difficult to keep the ballance *even*?
 That, a *divided* care, from growing *small*,
 Dwindles insensibly to *none at all*?

And

And thus the *gloomy* privilege friends *can* have,
 Is but to *sink* with those they mean to *save*!
Their drift, like slugs, imbody'd with a flower,
 What they adhere to, *soonest* to devour.

In so *absurd* a state of things as *this*,
 Descry we not a *flaw*—somewhat *amiss*?

Who builds, on mutual *aid*, and mutual *want*,
 Fair friendship's fabrick, lays his *base* too *scant*;
 Th' assailing pow'rs of *int'rest* to withstand
 Unable—and but twists a rope of sand.

The freighted bark with sordid *int'rest* steers,
 Carries a load—of doubts—suspicious—fears—
 French traffick! which Dutch friendship *may* con-
 ceal,

But, from as *honest* motives, *must* reveal!
 The British Argo, with her canvass spread,
 Rides on the ocean, void of doubt or dread:
 Fit emblem of her bounteous sov'reign's heart,
 Blessings, not to *receive*, but to *impart*.

Such, or more *pure*, the sentiment from whence,
 Friendship her influence glories to dispense!

Exchange of favours—barter—compromising—
 Contracts—equivalents—as *trash*, despising :
 O'er *blushing* modesty a veil displays,
 To check the scorplings of too *fierce* a blaze :
 Nor, when she in her *full* extent appears
 To her *own* merit, *awful* trophies rears :
 The *same*, or in a palace or a grotto,
 With *esse quam videri* for her motto !
 So Heaven, whose goodness to *free* grace amounts,
 With sinners never *balances* accounts.

Who would, the loan of *interested* smiles,
 That *base*ly of himself, himself beguiles ?
 The *bribe*, that to *dependency* allures,
 Inflicting *greater* ills than those it *cures*—
 The Rubicon, which *wanton*ly once pass'd,
 'Tis vain to hope, freedom hath *long to last*—
 Freedom ! the *vantage*-ground, which they who
 quit,
 T' indignities, they dream not of, *submit*—
 Freedom ! which unexampled *sweets* creates,
 To friendships as *essential*, as to states.

Yet, there are those, whose *profit* d aim,
 So mask'd, extends not farther than a *name* ;
 Deep schemers ! who vast funds of bubble raise,
 B' alternate ecchoings of *praise* purchas'd praise !
 And, more degen'rate reptiles, not a few,
 In the *same* liv'ry, modes of *gain* pursue.

Thus have I seen, as I a sand-cart watch'd,
 Th' *important* farce, of " scratching to be
 scratch'd ;"

When two grave dons, to fight, in friendship *lost*,
 Were but *regaling* at each other's *cost* !
 Blest *such* alliances, gods in their birth ;
 They are quite rank, and *smell too much of earth*.

Be it, that *sentimental* then, as true
 Amity's source, so its *perfection* too.
 Some stocks, by nature curs'd, for use unfit,
 Of profit, by improvement, may admit ;
 This of s' *exact* a growth, both branch and root,
 Grafting but seldom meliorates the fruit :
 Art may avail, its rudeness to comptroll,
 But Nature *forms* and *animates* the whole.

As miners *separate*, not *make* the ore,
 Whence kingdoms are exempt from being poor ;
 Discernment's task is to explore a foil,
 Such as may recompence th' advent'rer's toil ;
 Whose qualities, by *close* observance, known,
 The purchase make, at any price, your own :
 But first, by *gradual* advances, creep,
 A length of search, *beneath* the surface, *deep* :
 For comely *outsides* oft conceal a part
Within defective, or unsound at heart.
 Like swampy lands, the plough-share ruins quite,
 Whose excellence lies only in the bite !

Some, by complacency *alone*, have gain'd
 Th' ascendant, where the passion was but *feign'd* ;
 For flatt'ry hath a *privileg'd* pretence
 To favour, both from fools and men of sense
Others, self-will'd, or more severely bent,
 For *breeding*, substitute a *good intent* :
 But surely, *this* or *that* is nothing worth,
 If, for the garment, we mistake the cloth ;

Or, with stage-quackery, mixing up a bowl,
 Make, of *one* useful part, an useless *whole*.
 Your Curio, whose *adroitness* all confess,
 To be the standard of *true* politesse;
 Whether his *theme* be government or trade—
 The *faults* by ministers or Ringwood made—
 The *trips* of St. John, or his fav'rite horse—
 Or the oeconomy of Laura's purse—
 Even *he*—with whom the subt'lest of us all
 Engaging, need not blush t' endure a *fall*;
 Would look *ill-pleas'd*, if no man at his board
 Durst interpose a *contradicting* word;
 And rather wish to have his dinner spoil'd,
 Than see himself so cocker'd as a child.

Nor Alba's booby lord, whose *fault'ring* tongue
 Vibrates incessantly, or right or wrong—
 Whose imbecillity of intellects,
 Is but the *chief* of *many* gross defects;
 Coop'd in such idiocy, believe so *dull*,
 T'*esteem* the friend, who, swerving from all rule,
 Calls him, at every turn, wronghead and fool! }

Be't then, to think alike?—Why, that's a jest,
 Full as exceptionable, as the rest :
 A fancy'd scheme ! Utopian and ideal—
 Which never *was*—which never *can* be, real—
 Till forms invariable are fix'd, for thinking,
 With just the same precision as for drinking.

Semblance of fortune—quality—degree—
 Charms less inviting still, we daily see :
 Lawyers *th's* club their *three-pences apiece*,
 Hurrying to Westminster, some wretch to fleece !
 Pedlar *thus*, in large droves, resort to fairs—
 Dey—*rich-latchmen* fly to court by pairs ;
 Box'd on *one* car, or in two *partner*-chairs !
 Such the connexion, ere his trade was spoil'd,
 'Twixt each grand *thief*, and grand *thief-taker*,
 Will !

These, but conveniences, how soon forgot !
 Call 'em—*messieurs and comp.*—friends they are
 not.

Is it, like idlers then, to meet together,
 And talk of news and changes in the weather ?

So, thoughtless Frenchmen act, *without design*,
 And, with duke Humphry, on Park-benches dine !
 Or is it from the court's *infectious* air,
Sables; with *those* of the *same* house, to wear ?
 So Ferrers, for his pranks, most justly scorn'd,
 By *kindred*-peers, was both condemn'd and
 mourn'd !
 So, George and Lewis, far as *outward* show,
 Whilst enemies, partake each other's woe !

A *genuine* friendship nobler tracks pursues,
 Her flights more *lofty*, more *enlarg'd* her views :
 To *standings*, whose unappal'd resource is
 As far remov'd, from sensual, selfish courses,
 As from capricious freaks, and *bobby-horses* :
 Her boast, our appetites so to refine,
 That *crude* associations ne'er combine—
 (Associations, when not *good* with *great*,
 The *bane* and the *opprobrium* of our state)
 Whose chemick-virtue all *defects* sublimes,
 At once, of individuals and the times :
 Like Jacob's ladder, every want supplies,
 Tho' fix'd on earth, by reaching to the skies !

O, for a *muse of fire* ! in *equal* verse,
 Her *all-attractive* graces to rehearse !
 T' anticipate *future* by *present* bliss,
 And joys of worlds *to come*, from joys of *this* !
 Was I, both characters expert to blend,
 Th' *instructive* poet and th' *indearing* friend—
 Alike susceptible, with Pope or Young,
 Of friendship's ardour and the pow'r of song—
 Lælius, to thee, my *first* and *early* choice,
 The muse should *gratefully* attune her voice ;
 Recal, from mem'ry's *faithful* storehouse ta'en,
 Wherewith to realize th' *affecting* strain :
 And, from the *sal'ies* of our *greener* days,
 When pride was innocence, and laugh was praise ;
 When, each ambitious, strove but to excel,
 I' th' undissembled arts of *trifling* well ;
 Note by what *easy* steps the passion mov'd,
 Thro' *shifting* scenes, and every hour improv'd ;
 Till, what with *unexperienc'd* youth began,
 Expanding gently, grew *complete* in man ;
 Superior to th' inclemency of time,
 The lure of novelty and change of clime ;

With

With the *same* vigour, future as the past,
 Long (for so bodes my heart) as life to last.

Here rest we, *Lælius* : an *exacter* chart
 To go by, *nicest* rules cannot impart :
 Fancy's but dull—and all description faint,
 Compar'd with *this*, which I from nature paint :
 Whose *outlines* given, ask but a *mod'rate* skill,
 With justice and propriety to fill.

Whether the world's *broad* theatre become
 The spot for action, or the quiet home—
 In courts or camps—publick or private life—
 Jocund or sad—with or without a wife—
 Absent or present—with good Tristram Shandy,
 Shrewd observator, at their elbow handy—
 By foll'wing nature, friends may well agree,
 Discreet tho' zealous—cautious and yet free—
 To perfect harmony, like that, 'twixt you and me. }

TO A
F R I E N D:

Occasioned by the universally-unwel-
come Report of the KING of PRUS-
SIA's being killed in a battle with the
AUSTRIANS.

WHERE is the man, through love, or
hope, or fear,

Who crowns not bleeding Frederick with a tear?

And is he then, did we unitedly call

The *dark* event, *unhappy* in his fall?

Mistaken mortals! learn to judge aright;

To estimate by *facts*, and not by *fight*!

So reason'd Villars *, envy'ng Berwick's fate—
 Is Fred'rick less than Berwick, fortunate?
 What had not *this*, great as the *other*, done?
More cities taken, and *more* battles won!
 One thing remain'd, as yet, for *both* to try—
 And *both* succeeded—like themselves, *to die*!

Safe from *reversal* turns; the selfish ends
 Of *treach'reus* foes—and still more *faithless* friends;
 Confed'rate-states for his *destruction* joining;
 And *kindred*-princes, at his *death*, repining;
 The hero, nobly slain, in death receives
 Security—*such* as death only gives!

Else had, perhaps, as *late* Braganza felt,
 Some *anger'd* chief, revenge in *secret* dealt;
 Stilettoes and envenom'd goblets try'd,
 To call back fortune to *fall'n* Austria's side;

* Very memorable is the saying of marshal Villars when he heard the duke of Berwick was taken off, in one stroke, by a cannon-ball at the siege of Philipburgh—"He was ever a lucky man."

Or valet, for *some* dirty ducats, been
 Ambition's tool, to blast the *first* of men !
 Perhaps Britannia, by *new* counsels mov'd,
 No longer her *important* aid approv'd—
 His *shining* virtues ceas'd to be rever'd—
 As conqu'rors rarely are more *lov'd* than *fear'd* :
 As popularity's a meteor, blown
Aloft at first, but quickly humbled down !

Time was, when V——n, with *six ships alone*,
 Was oft'ner drank, than G—— upon the throne !
 Sage P——m, when his predecessor fell,
 Might have led Britons, *with a thread*, to hell !
 Yet, strange to tell, the statesman and the tar
 Saw and lamented, *their decline*, from far !
 Fate kindly interpos'd, just when each name
 Was dwindling to a wretched, *sign-post*, fame !
 One only, W——, eminently *bad*
 Amidst ten thousand, the *disernment* had,
 To *sweeten* ruin—to *cajole* the times
 With a *succession* of *endearing* crimes.

Firm—constant—steady ; principles to *rest on*,
 Are, with mankind, *rough* terms of *hard* digestion !
A truth,

A *truth*, Nassau experienc'd—for he stood
All *other* shocks, but *that* of being too good !

A *truth*—of parts confess'dly so sublime,
Wise Pitt, without suspicion of a crime,
Will know, when once a minister of *time* ! }

But say—should crowds and popular applause,
Not *shift* their *fav'rites*, as they *shift* their *cause*—
May not *capricious* nature *backward* run,
And *counter-act* a part she well begun ?
May not *rank* infamy, i' *th' end*, await,
What, at *first* setting out, was *truly* great ?
And, the *best* dispositions, growing less
Of rule observant, *sicken* with success ?
Such *revolutions*, beyond mortal ken,
Indisputably *threaten* men—as Men :
Which Providence, in *mercy*, may defeat,
By *timely* sounding, an *unwis'd* retreat !

Had Pollio dy'd (Pollio th' *inconstant* head
Of patriots) ere his *patriot*-genius fled ;
His 'scutcheon, with propriety, had shown
A character, *peculiarly* his own !

And

And what prov'd, every year, that *after* came,
More than an *annual draw-back* on his fame !

Comenius—our Comenius too *may* spoil—
Or, as the best-wrought piece, o'er-charg'd *dracil* !
He, *whom* politeness hath not *fritter'd* down,
To th' empty noise and nonsense of the town—
Whom Russian savages but prompt *in vain*,
To be less British—candid and humane—
The youth, in some *ill-fated* hour, may yet
His each attractive grace and charm forget :
Grow purse-proud—disingenuous—insincere—
Unlike himself, as like * * * * *

Even I—the *most resign'd* of all my *tribe*,
Whom sufferings ne'er could *move*, nor int'rest *brile*,
May quit my system—with *resentment* glow,
At *wrongs*, too big for chastisement *below* ;
Or, *flatter*, in a more *exalted* lay,
Exchanging *standard* wit, for *sterling* pay !

And thou, *less frail*, on whom such lustres shine,
For all that's virtuous—moral—and divine—

May'st,

May'st, in lawn sleeves, *dislook* thy *former* self,
 And, *prelate-like*, turn slave to power or pelf;
 Those *strict*, but *sweetest*, manners undergo
Change—to licentiousness, parade, and show:
 Thy friends survive that *change*, tho' late to see,
 And grieve to find th' apostate, *justly* lash'd by me.

To

To the M E M O R Y
OF THE
Rev. Mr. CASTLEMAN,

Late Prebendary of Bristol, Vicar of St.
Nicolas, in the said City; and also of
South Petherton, all in the County of
Somerset.

THOU, that wast Castleman! whose mortal
frame,
Crumbled to dust, no longer claims that name!
If e'er thy tender, sympathising heart
Bore, in a friend's concerns, a friendly part—
If e'er thy bosom felt the heaving sigh—
O: thy eyes water'd, with the melting eye—
Blest

Blest shade ! thy extacies awhile suspend,
 In pity to the sufferings of a friend :
 To hear affliction's undissembled moan,
 And deep-fetch'd plaints, like those, so oft thy
 own !

Be it, that duty to a sov'reign's will,
 Is resignation—man, as man, must feel !
 Exalted virtues, and transcendent worth,
 All that we boast, of sentiment, call forth :
 And, nature's debt, when too untimely paid,
 Baffles philosophy and wisdom's aid :
 Religion only, which of faith and fight
 Prescribes the bounds—knows, “ all, *that is, is*
 right.”

Whether by precept or example led,
 To reason thus—be ever this my creed !
 So shall thy image, on my thoughts impress'd,
 Late, very late, its hold be dispossest'd :
 Nor until death and the last awful scene
 Unite us—not to separate again !

L

Could

Could I, with stoical indifference, see,
 Deaf to the name of friend, no loss in thee—
 'Twere impious and unnatural, to decline
 A common cause, in which such numbers join !
 To pass, unmov'd and unaffected, by
 The widow's tears, the helpless orphan's cry—
 The indigent, regretting his hard fate,
 In the lost comforts of thy op'ning gate—
 Oppression's objects, by thy fost'ring aid,
 Superior to the scourge of greatness made—
 And, to crown all, at thy enliv'ning word,
 Desponding sinners happily restor'd
 To peace, and the forgiveness of their Lord !

Such the endowments, and so well improv'd,
 The talents of the man I dearly lov'd;
 Even pride, in all its colours, would confess—
 Or, to be well with him, was—pride in its excess !

But chiefly thou, the part'ner of *his* bed,
 With whom, all sublunary joys are fled—
 Say, shall the muse, impatient of thy grief,
 Forego her wonted pow'r, to give relief ?

Avails

Avails it not, she prides herself to tell,
 The zeal with which he labour'd to excel ?
 At social hours, how sweet his converse flow'd—
 How warm, in his connections, passion glow'd—
 How mild his censures, Christian not severe—
 His admonitions, courtly yet sincere—
 Yes—for thy love was of the nobler kind,
 Fix'd by th' attractive graces of the mind :
 And his perfections, each in some degree,
 Reflect a grateful lustre too on thee !

Nor rest we here—prophetick are our lays,
 And objects, far remov'd the muse surveys :
 Already she contemplates the reward,
 On early piety, like thine, conferr'd—
 A second union, in the realms above,
 Shall suitably requite thy work of love—
 Thy Castleman (let *me* too call him mine)
 With rapt'rous ardour, fav'ring the design ;
 Scarce from anxiety, in transports, free,
 Or, incompleat in bliss, expecting thee !

Still

Still vibrates on my ear—"the sweet content
 "Of a good conscience, in a life well spent * ;"
 And his quick sense, b' anticipation given,
 Of a remunerating *state*, in heaven.

* These two lines are an allusion, almost *totidem verbis*, to a passage in Mr. Castleman's very last letter, not a great while before he died, to the author : the impression of which is more strong and affecting, as this truly excellent person was, at that time, thought by him and others of his acquaintance, to be in a very good state of health.

F I N I S.



E R R A T A.

Page 5, Line 13. *read*, in the Flush.

8, Line 5. *dele* to.

48, l. 6. *for* Supposition *read* Suspicion.

117, l. 17. *dele* or.

129, l. 1. *for* privilege *read* prev'lege.

131, l. 12. *for* blest *read* blast.

140, l. 8. *for* humbled *read* tumbled.